by underlining and the deletions are shown by brackets. Please enter the replacement specification paragraphs into the record of this case.

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 5-8, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein, in favor of new claims 9-21 as follows. Please enter the new claims into the record of this case.

[001] ~~CONSTRUCTIONAL~~ ACCESS UNIT WITH VARIABLE SIZE OPENING FOR CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

[004] This invention relates to a constructional or access unit for construction application.

[008] According to the present invention there is provided a constructional or access unit comprising:

[014] According to a first preferred version of the present invention the, or each, leg can be varied in length to provide for the support frame to be maintained horizontal or at a predetermined angle relative to [[the]] horizontal.

[025] The base frame 15 of the first member 13 includes a flange 15A by means of which the unit 11 is located in an opening [[20]] 37 in floor F2 at a height L1, above a lower floor F1. The opening [[20]] 37 forms the top of a stair well for stair [[S]] 50.

[028] In use the props 31, 35 are extended as shown in Figure 2 with the braces 32, 36 secured and the feet 31B, 35B are extended and clamped to ensure that the second base frame 18 is positioned in the opening [[20]] 37 with the side arms 16, 17, 19,20 are substantially horizontal. This configuration of

the unit 11 while providing a secure structure does not intrude into the stair [[S]] 50 and leaves a clear space A between the props (see Figure 3) so that access is readily available to the foot of the stair [[S]] 50 for individuals or equipment to pass between floor F1,F2.

[030] The constructional or access unit 11 provides for a secure mounting to lie within opening. It is further provided with a closure member 40 in the form of a folding lattice (Figure 3) of aluminum alloy which while being light is of substantial strength. A suitable closure member for this purpose is the safety unit the subject of our UK Application 2,339,824. This member 40 is readily slid into place to close, or out of position to give access to, opening [[20]] 37. Being of openwork construction it is possible for somebody wishing to use the stair [[S]] 50 (whether to ascend or descend) to view the region they wish to enter to establish whether or not it is safe to move the closure member 40. When in place the closure member 40 serves to prevent people or objects cannot inadvertently fall through opening [[20]] 37.

[031] Second base frame 18 lies within [[space 20]] opening 37 and is supported there by telescopic props 31, 35. To ensure that the frame 18 is laterally supported when space 20 is otherwise clear of the frame 18 a pair of lateral props 41, 42 are provided which can be driven outwardly to seat against the side of the [[space 20]] opening 37 and be locked their to limit lateral movement of frame 18 and so stabilise unit 11.

1-8. (CANCELED)

9. (NEW) An access unit for covering an opening in an upper floor, the access unit comprising:

a support frame having a generally O-shaped configuration with an open central region, the support frame including U-shaped first and second members, each of the first and the second members comprises a base frame defining one end of the open central region, and a pair of spaced apart side arms extending parallel to one another from opposite ends of the base frame; the pair of side arms of the first member being telescopically received within the pair of side arms of the second member to facilitate adjustment of a length of the open central region; and the open central region, defined by the base frame and the pair of spaced apart side arms of the first member and the base frame and the pair of spaced apart side arms of the second member, being completely unobstructed and open so as to allow unhindered passage of at least a person through the open central region, and the telescopic adjustment of the pair of spaced apart side arms facilitates desired spacing of the base frame of the first member from the base frame of the second member over a range of distances; and the pair of spaced apart side arms of one of the first and the second members each having a clamp for temporary securing of the side arms of the first member to the side arms of the second member at a pre-determined relationship and maintaining the desired spacing of the base frame of the first member from the base frame of the second member;

the second member having at least one adjustable prop which is pivotably attached adjacent the base frame of the second member for supporting the second member at a desired level;

the base frame of the first member being adapted for position at a first location; and

the base frame of the second member being adapted for positioning at a second location, remote from the base frame of the first member but at substantially a same level as the base frame of the first member so as to position the support frame of the access unit in a substantially horizontal orientation, and an opposite end of the at least one adjustable prop being adapted for location at the second location with the second location being offset from and being located vertically below the first location.

10. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 9, wherein a length of each adjustable prop is variable to facilitate maintaining the access unit in one of a horizontal orientation and at a desired angle relative to horizontal.

11. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 9, further comprising a removable platform member for covering the open central region, when the platform member is in a first working position, and preventing passage of one of the person and an article located above the support unit from inadvertently passing through the open central region; and

the platform member, when the platform member is in a second position removed from the open central region, allowing unimpeded passage of at least one of the person and the article through the open central region.

12. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 11, wherein the platform member is at least in part of open construction to enable viewing through the open central region when the platform member is in the first working position.

13. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 11, wherein a length of each of the pair of spaced apart side arms of the first member is greater than a length the base frame of the first member.

14. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 11, wherein a space between the base frame of the first member and the base frame of the second member is completely unobstructed, a space between the opposed legs of the first member is completely unobstructed, and a space between the opposed legs of the second member is completely unobstructed.

15. (NEW) An access unit for covering an opening in an upper floor, the access unit comprising:

a support frame having a generally O-shaped configuration with an open central region, the support frame including U-shaped first and second members, each of the first and the second members comprises a base frame defining one end of the open central region, and a pair of spaced apart side arms extending parallel to one another from opposite ends of the base frame; the pair of side arms of the first member being telescopically received within the pair of side arms of the second member to facilitate adjustment of a length of the open central region; and the open central region, defined by the base frame and the pair of spaced apart side arms of the first member

and the base frame and the pair of spaced apart side arms of the second member, being completely unobstructed and open without anything being located between the base frames for the first and the second members so as to allow unhindered passage of a person through the open central region, and the telescopic adjustment of the pair of spaced apart side arms facilitates desired spacing of the base frame of the first member from the base frame of the second member over a range of distances; and each of the spaced apart side arms of the second member having a clamp for temporary securing of the side arms of the first member to the side arms of the second member at a pre-determined relationship and maintaining the desired spacing of the base frame of the first member from the base frame of the second member;

the second member having a pair of spaced apart adjustable props which are pivotably attached adjacent the base frame of the second member for supporting the second member at a desired level;

the base frame of the first member being adapted for position at a first location; and

the pair of spaced apart adjustable props facilitate positioning of the base frame of the second member at substantially a same level as the base frame of the first member so as to position the support frame of the access unit within a stairwell in a substantially horizontal orientation.

16. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 15, wherein a length of each adjustable prop is variable to facilitate maintaining the access unit in one of a horizontal orientation and at a desired angle relative to horizontal.

17. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 15, further comprising a removable platform member for covering the open central region, when the platform member is in a first working position, and preventing passage of one of the person and an article located above the support unit from inadvertently passing through the open central region; and

the platform member, when the platform member is in a second position removed from the open central region, allowing unimpeded passage of at least one of the person and the article through the open central region.

18. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 17, wherein the platform member is at least in part of open construction to enable viewing through the open central region when the platform member is in the first working position.

19. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 17, wherein a length of each of the pair of spaced apart side arms of the first member is greater than a length the base frame of the first member.

20. (NEW) The access unit according to claim 15, wherein a space between the base frame of the first member and the base frame of the second member is completely unobstructed, a space between the opposed legs of the first member is completely unobstructed, and a space between the opposed legs of the second member is completely unobstructed.

21. (NEW) An access unit for covering an opening in an upper floor, the access unit comprising:

a support frame having a generally oval shaped configuration with a completely unobstructed open central region, the support frame including U-shaped first and second members, each of the first and the second members comprises a base frame defining one end of the open central region, and a pair of spaced apart side arms extending parallel to one another from opposite ends of the base frame; the pair of side arms of the first member being telescopically received within the pair of side arms of the second member to facilitate adjustment of a length of the open central region; and the open central region, defined by the base frame and the pair of spaced apart side arms of the first member and the base frame and the pair of spaced apart side arms of the second member, being completely unobstructed and open without anything being located between the opposed legs of the first and the second members and without anything being located between the base frames for the first and the second members so as to allow unhindered passage of a person through the open central region, and

the telescopic adjustment of the pair of spaced apart side arms facilitates desired spacing of the base frame of the first member from the base frame of the second member; and at least one of the spaced apart side arms having a clamp for temporary securing of the side arms of the first member and the side arms of the second member to one another at a pre-determined relationship and maintaining the

desired spacing of the base frame of the first member from the base frame of the second member;

the second member having a pair of spaced apart adjustable props which are pivotably attached adjacent the base frame of the second member for supporting the second member at a desired level;

the pair of spaced apart adjustable props facilitate positioning of the base frame of the second member within a stairwell in a substantially horizontal orientation;

a brace connects each of the adjustable props with one of the side arms of the second member; and

a removable platform member for covering the open central region, when the platform member is in a first working position, and preventing passage of one of a person and an article located above the support unit from inadvertently passing through the open central region; and the platform member, when the platform member is in a second position removed from the open central region, allowing unimpeded passage of at least one of the person and the article through the open central region.